1: Jenness--76-77 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 342, 361

"These winter settlements sometimes spread over a considerable area, while at other times they are crowded together within a very narrow space. The determining factor is the amount of snow. A settlement in the Duke of York archipelago in February, 1915, covered an area of about 300 x 125 yards. There were 21 dwellings, only five of which were two-roomed; the rest were all single and isolated, for the snow was shallow in this vicinity. When half of the settlement migrated a week or two later to Bernard harbour they built their houses almost touching one another. In November, 1914, the Puivlik Eskimos had a settlement in Forsyth bay, and their houses were all two-roomed, or in pairs with common passages, arranged in a single line along the face of a low ridge. Their next settlement was made behind a sandspit about four miles along the coast. Here most of the houses again were two-roomed, or in pairs, but the line was very irregular and there was a single house standing about 100 yards away from the rest. Their third settlement was at Putulik, one of the Liston and Sutton islands. In this their houses followed roughly the line of the shore, and the single huts were in the minority. At the end of February they migrated to the westward, and were joined by other natives; but now they were living far out on the ice and had no shore to guide their planning, so their huts were scattered in all directions. Fully half of them were detached and single, while the rest were two-roomed or in pairs with common passages. In the middle of March they moved west again, at least all who had not before that time gone eastward and

joined the Eskimos of Coronation gulf. One man now set up a large skin tent, the rest building ordinary huts of snow; but since there was only one long drift which offered a sufficient depth of snow they built their houses side by side, some single, others in pairs with the passages [77] linked together; in one case three families joined their passages. Three latecomers had to build some distance away, though still along the same bank of snow; their huts were single, two of them facing south like all the rest, but the third opening northwards, because only in that direction could snow be found to build the passage."

1: Jenness--119 (1913-16) 1922 Copper Eskimo
116, 484, 361

"Abandoned camps are often reoccupied a few weeks later, generally by the same inhabitants returning from a visit to neighbouring tribes; a stranger, though he occupies the same site, will usually build a new hut for himself. Often, although the settlement is abandoned, there are clear signs that the inhabitants intend to return before very long. The ice windows are left in place, the door-ways are blocked with snow, and tent poles and other gear still remain planted in the walls. Looking through the windows two or three large bags may be seen inside filled with meat and blubber. One native made a cache of three sealskin bags, two containing blubber and one seal meat, in a square hole in an ice keg near the hut he was abandoning. He covered the bags with three sealskins, and closed the hole with blocks of ice. Three weeks later he came back and recovered his property."

"A chronological record of the movements of the Dolphin and Union strait Eskimos in the winter and spring of 1915-16 will illustrate this account of their winter life. From December, 1915, to February, 1916, they were all united in one settlement of thirty-three snow huts, on the shore of Illuvillik, the most westerly island of the Liston and Sutton group. Some time during the first week of February they migrated in a body ten miles to the west and built new snow-huts on the ice. They remained here almost a month, then moved four or five miles south-southwest. Throughout March they were visited by large numbers of Coronation gulf natives, some from the Coppermine river basin and others from as far east as Bathurst inlet. On April 3, the settlement split up. One band of sixteen families made new homes ten miles farther west, four families migrated about the same distance north-northwest, and the remainder, save for two or three who left for Coronation gulf, moved eastward again and camped on the ice between the two eastern islands of the Liston and Sutton group, where they could seal in an area that had not been hunted over during the winter. The eleven families of this last settlement now set up nine tents to live in. The larger settlement to the west, on the other hand, consisted of snow huts only, the weather not being as yet so warm as to make these dwellings untenable. Their exact movements later I do not know, but by the end of April the members of the larger settlement had all moved away, some to Okauyarvik on the north side of Dolphin and Union strait, where they were hunting

caribou, the rest to the mouth of a creek twelve miles east of Bernard harbour, where they were shooting bearded seals and trying to intercept the caribou. The natives who had camped between the two islands were slowly moving northeast at the same time towards the land, and by May had reached the shore not far from Clouston bay. In June there were nine families at the fishing creek four miles east of Bernard harbour, two at the other creek twelve miles east, and six at a creek that flows into a bay just west of Cape Krusenstern. The other natives who had wintered in Dolphin and Union strait were all lost to view in Victoria island, with the exception of those who had gone down into Coronation gulf. ".

2: Stefansson--23 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
101, 116, 361

"In the region of the Mackenzie Delta there were a large number of permanently inhabited village sites. By permanent habitation, however, we mean only that there were houses at these places which were occupied regularly year after year at corresponding seasons for a month or more at a time. The most important of the western settlements was that one of the three on Herschel Island which was called Kigirktayuk. This name was sometimes even in the old days applied to the island as a whole, and now that the other two village sites on the island have been abandoned the name for the village has become synonymous for that of the island. Between Herschel Island and the Mackenzie River were several village sites, the most important of which seem to have been Kingak near King Point and Tapkark on the Shingle Point sandspit."

2: Stefansson--28 (1908-12) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 361

"We have never ourselves seen permanent villages or permanent dwellings among the Copper Eskimo, but we were told that Umingmuktok [JMR: on the west coast of Kent Peninsula] was inhabited the year around."

2: Stefansson--70 (1908-1912) 1914 Copper Eskimo
116, 221, 361

"Campsites are chosen with more care in summer than in winter. In the fall the Kogluktogmiut, they told us, are kept from moving out on the ice to the best sealing grounds by the lack of suitable snow for house-building everywhere except near shore. Why the Akuliakattagmiut remain near shore at Cape Bexley through the fall, till about the disappearing of the sun, we did not learn, but the reason is most likely the same. After midwinter, however, a village can be built wherever the ice is a little rough and has gathered snowdrifts of sufficient depth for house blocks and that is in several places every square mile of even the levelest ice the Straits can show. Of course, villages are seldom found in winter except in good sealing localities. What is a good site for a sealing village one year may not, however, be equally good the next for the seals, though more dependable than caribou, frequent certain localities more one year than another, the fluctuation depending probably largely on the season at which the ice forms in the fall and on the conditions of calm or storm under which it forms and its consequent roughness.

The summer of 1910 we saw several hundred sites of summer camps, two dozen or so of which were occupied when we saw them. The location is always marked by the stone tent rings (the stones that have been used to hold down the tent flaps) and usually by numerous other works of man, shavings of wood, bones and horns of animals, flat stones raised on edge for fireplaces, drying frames for meat, or for windbreaks, etc.

Over ninety percent of these are situated on hill tops that give a commanding view of the surrounding country. The reasons for choosing such hill tops were given as follows: 1) Fear of Indian attack; 2) Desire of a good view of the caribou feeding grounds; 3) The advantage of a wind-swept hill in mitigating the plague of mosquitoes and sandflies. Those that hunt toward Bear Lake told us the nearer they camped to the lake the more carefully they chose their campsites for 'you never know when or from where the Indians may come.' "

"It was only near shore that the ice was rough, and with our light sled we made good progress; it was the first time on the trip that we did not have to pull in harness ourselves; instead we took turns in riding, two sitting on the sled at the same time and one running ahead to cheer the dogs on. We made about six miles per hour, and inside of two hours we arrived at another deserted village, about a month more recent than the one found at Cape Bexley. We were, therefore, on the trail not of a traveling party but of a migratory community.

As we understood dimly then and know definitely now, each village on such a trail should be about ten miles from the next preceding, and should be about a month more recent. The explanation of this is simple. The village of a people who hunt seal on level 'bay' ice must not be on shore, for it is not convenient for a hunter to go more than five miles at the most from camp to look for the seal-holes, and naturally there are no seal-holes [170] on land; the inhabitants of a sea village can hunt through an entire circle whose radius is about five miles; the inhabitants of a shore village can hunt through only half a circle of the same radius, for the other half of it will be on land. When the frost overtakes the seals in the fall, each of them, wherever he happens to be, gnaws several holes in the thin ice and rises to these whenever he needs to breathe. As the ice thickens he keeps them open by continuous gnawing, and for the whole of the winter that follows he is kept a prisoner in their neighborhood because of the fact that if he ever went to a considerable distance he would be unable to find a place to reach the air,

and would therefore die of suffocation. By the aid of their dogs the Eskimo find these breathing-holes of the seals underneath the snow that hides them in winter, and spear the animals as they rise for air. In a month or so the hunters of a single village will have killed all the seals within a radius of about five miles; they must then move camp about ten miles, so that a five-mile circle around their next camp shall be tangent to the five-mile circle about their last one; for if the circles overlapped there would be that much waste territory within the new circle of activities. If, then, you are following such a trail and come to a village about four months old, you will expect to find the people who made it not more than forty miles off.

In the present case our task was simplified by the fact that the group we were following had not moved straight ahead north, but had made their fourth camp west of the second. Standing on the roofs of the houses of the second camp, we could see three seal-hunters a few miles to the west, each sitting on his block of snow by a seal-hole waiting for the animal to rise."

11: Stefansson--189 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 487, 361

"The afternoon before we started, there had been a dance in the snow assembly-house, followed first by a supper of boiled seal-meat and blood soup, and they by a conference on how we should go about finding the village we wanted to visit, for finding the nearest Eskimo village is not always the simple matter it is to go from the city to a suburban town. The villages, to begin with, are never permanent, nor are they built in any recognized places, and blizzards may nearly or quite obliterate the trails that show which way the traveling parties have gone."

11: Stefansson--279 (1908-1912) 1913 Copper Eskimo
116, 361

"From the top of the island the next morning I could with the glasses see a native village on the ice ten or fifteen miles to the north-west, approximately in the middle of Prince Albert Sound. When we approached it we saw this to be the largest village of our whole experience. It turned out that there were twenty-seven dwelling houses in it. We had, of course, seen the ruined trading village at Cape Bexley, which had over fifty dwellings, but these had been the houses of traders from half a dozen or more different tribes, while this turned out to be the one tribe of the Kanghirgyuargmiut, and they were not all at home either, for later on we visited another village of three houses of the same people, and a third village of four houses we never saw at all."

12: Collinson--171 (1851-53) 1889 Copper Eskimo
116, 361, 226

"On our route to the ship next morning we found the Huskis [T.M: a sailor's term for Eskimo] camped in snow houses on the banks of one of the lakes, where they were now employed fishing; having cut holes through the ice and attracted the fish by some glittering object, it was speared. Some they had procured thus were ten and twelve pounds weight, two of which we purchased for an awl and two needles, and found them to be salmon trout, and capital eating."

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the conclusion of the feast, but the novel friendship persisted, and the hunter always treated "Hippimanna" as a brother whenever their paths happened to bring them together.

About the middle of November, when Chipman and O'Neill were outfitting for their journey, the Eskimos in the hinterland gave up caribou-hunting and settled on the coast to prepare for the sealing season. Five families who had built their snow-houses a few miles east of our station now paid us daily visits, and the women rendered good service by making us clothes and sleeping-bags from the raw furs we had brought on our schooners. They sewed most of these articles inside the station, where we provided the necessary needles and thread; and they behaved amazingly well, considering their inexperience of white men and the strangeness of the surroundings. Their broad, smiling faces enlivened our sober home, and their keen sense of humour led to many amusing incidents. They thought the panes of glass a novel kind of ice, and on their first visit could not distinguish the door from the rest of the house. "Knee," a comedian already admitted inside, laughed and gesticulated at them through the windows, and when they wandered round and round, seeking in vain for the entrance, gravely advised them to try the stove-pipe.

Their honesty, alas! was not above suspicion. Nor could we feel surprised. We were white men, beings

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primus lamp. But the lamp refused to burn, and even the lantern began to go out. Then I realized that I had made the hut too air-tight, that the oxygen was exhausted, and that we would quickly smother unless we broke down the door and let in some fresh air.

Skirting the coast-line, we came upon fresh tracks leading away from a primitive fox-trap built of snow-blocks. Presently we sighted four men coming from different directions, who ran toward a common focus behind a ridge as soon as they noticed our sled. My companion raced ahead, flinging up his arms in the peace-signal as he, too, disappeared from my view. I followed more slowly with the dog-team, and, breasting the ridge, discovered the four strangers lined up as though on parade, the tallest man on the right. He announced his name, I told him mine, and, stepping down the line, introduced myself to the next man with as much formality as at a president's levee. But the last youth had three names, all very long; and he pronounced the three in one breath. My ears could not register so many ponderous syllables, and I said with a smile, "Phew, *takirut* (What long names)." The strangers gasped at this amazing breach of etiquette, but immediately saw the humour of the situation and laughed uproariously.

We approached their village in triumph, two of the men escorting me in front, two racing behind with my companion. Their twelve snow-huts lay at the bottom

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of the bay, where a band of children were rolling hoops along the ice of the foreshore. "White man, white man," my companions shouted as they ran. The villagers poured out of their houses and crowded around me, men jostling women, and women pushing aside men, in their eagerness to scan my face and tell me their names. At the last came a tall, dignified man of about middle age who warmly seized my arm and invited me to enter his hut. When I crawled in behind him he set me in the place of honour at the back of the sleeping-platform, dusted the snow from my shoes, and seated himself in front at my feet.

My guide had relatives in this village with whom he proposed to spend the night; but I had many notes to write and desired a separate snow-hut where I could be quiet and undisturbed. The Eskimos gladly built one for me while I unharnessed and fed the dogs; and they vied with each other in unloading the sled, hoping to catch a glimpse of my trade goods. Some stayed to share my supper, boiled rice seasoned with sugar and canned milk; and it was amusing to watch their faces as each in turn swallowed a spoonful of the novel dish. Not all of them shared my own opinion of its excellence, and the discussion that arose about the white man's food might have lasted all night if the distant booming of a drum had not diverted their thoughts and brought about a hasty exodus. The people were holding a dance in my honour, and awaited

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ings for us, stand shyly inside the doorway, kicking their feet together restlessly as though knocking off the snow. Every one is tired after the day's journey, and as soon as the meal is ended strips off his clothes, tucks them under his head for a pillow, and glides into a sleeping-bag of caribou fur. Mrs. Light is the last to retire, for she still has some small duties to perform. She calls in the dogs from the passageway, one by one, throws them a few strips of blubber, and drives them out with the snow-duster, a short stick for beating the snow from our garments. Then she adjusts the lamp for the night, turns our boots and mittens so that they will dry on both sides, fits the snow-block into the doorway to keep out the cold air and the dogs, and slips quickly into her husband's "double" bag of caribou fur. Most of the inmates sleep with their mouths open, and their loud snores reverberating inside the hut drown the less resonant notes of the dogs in the passage.

Leaving Putulik, I rejoined my late acquaintances on Victoria Island. The sun no longer climbed above the horizon, and the "day" was limited to the twilight hours from 9:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.; but a bright moon lit up the trail for me during the last three hours of the journey. The tribe was still living in the same settlement, for the women had not completed all the new fur clothes their families required during the winter months, and it would violate one of their most rigid taboos to finish the sewing on the sea-ice,

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arrows. We had supplies in abundance to cover most of their needs; but the other members of our party spoke no Eskimo, and had gladly delegated all the trading to me after the first day's experience. Anderson, who joined us at Christmas, approved the arrangement, which held throughout the duration of the expedition. It placed a power in my hands that increased my security among the natives and rescued me from more than one awkward predicament. On this occasion the mere cessation of trade for a few days quelled their aggressiveness and checked any further attempt at open robbery.

As soon as the majority of the women had finished their sewing, the Eskimos began to migrate along the coast to a low promontory from which they could cross in one day to the Liston and Sutton Islands. They moved on different mornings, and at different hours of the morning, some early and some late. Their only clocks were the sun by day and the moon and stars by night; but the sun had now disappeared for several weeks, the moon set early, and the stars do not shine through walls of snow. So my host, who wished to set out at daybreak, roused his household nearly three hours too soon; and his grievous error made us shiver in idleness on the sleeping-platform until it grew light enough to load up the sleds.

The villagers were too practical to carry all the furniture out through the long passageways when they

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abandoned their huts. Those who had windows of ice in their houses removed them and passed their goods through the gap; and those who had no windows cut large holes in the walls, which they could fill up with a snow-block or two if they wanted to reoccupy the huts. But the Eskimos seldom returned to the same habitations; old houses remained deserted until the spring, when they melted slowly away under the warm rays of the sun. Passing travellers might occupy them for a night, but even they generally preferred to build new houses, which were warmer and more comfortable. Hence one could readily discover all the winter movements of these Eskimos by tracking down the villages they had successively deserted between October and May.

Our migration along the coast resulted in a new settlement of snow-huts a few yards out from the beach. It was too early in the winter to camp far from shore, for a violent gale might break the level ice-field into drifting floes. Even the light gale that sprang up four nights later produced a large tide-crack under two houses that lay more to seaward than the rest. Misfortune ruled that I should be sleeping in one of them. The snow-blocks cracked one after another, with loud reports like pistol-shots, and the walls split from ceiling to floor. Then the water poured up through the tide-crack and flooded the hut nearly to the level of the sleeping-platform. My hostess, stepping down to

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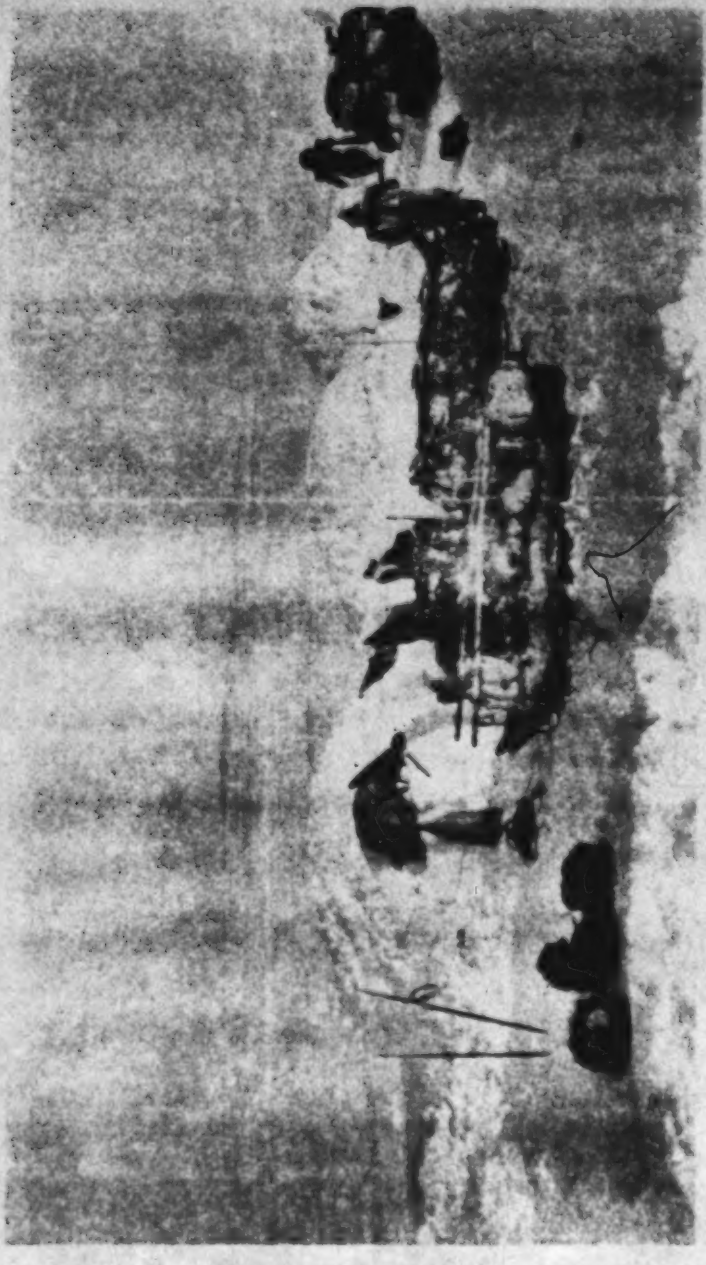

They built their settlement close to the beach.

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some friends in British Columbia, and felt our isolation slip away for a few hours as we joined with the rest of the Christian world in common festival.

Our enlarged party now required more accommodation, so the store became a kitchen fitted with bunks for Castel and Cockney. The two western Eskimos, Palaiyak and Ikey, slept in a tent surrounded by snow-walls covered with a tarpaulin roof. The house itself was reserved for the six members of the scientific staff. That, at least, was our intention; but unfortunately the natives around us were too civilized to read the notice on the door, and inundated our hut as frequently as before.

Christmas ended, I returned to my Eskimos at Putulik, in the Liston and Sutton Islands, taking Palaiyak as assistant and interpreter. The natives whom I had visited on Victoria Island had also gathered there, so that the settlement now consisted of some thirty families living in twenty-five snow-huts. We erected our tent right in their midst, and built a snow-hut over it, both for warmth and for extra storage-room between the two walls. Not wishing to violate any of their customs concerning the sharing of food, we entertained two or three visitors at every meal, and distributed the scraps among the crowd at the door. Trading and visiting among the houses occupied most of the day-time; but after the hunters returned from their sealing we attended the celebra-

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on the first occasion by holding a private party at which they shared the white man's food—tea, hard bread, and chocolate. When I left them in charge again the following day they immediately trimmed the lamp, placed a pot of water over the flame to boil, and set out the cups for another afternoon tea.

These Eskimos of Dolphin and Union Strait forbade any cooking of caribou meat on the sea during the winter months, believing that it would cause the ice under their settlement to upheave and engulf them. Eskimos living farther to the eastward were less scrupulous, and often cooked caribou meat when they were camped on bay ice that was not likely to crack under the stress of a winter storm. But a strong current passes through Dolphin and Union Strait, and new cracks and pressure ridges make their appearance as late as the end of January. The regulation was therefore rigidly observed by the local Eskimos, who often warned us against infringing it at Putulik, even though their settlement was only a few yards from the shore. Palaiyak, my western Eskimo, who had outgrown most of these superstitions, was more annoyed than I that we should be compelled to eat our venison raw, or else carry it to Bernard Harbour, where our house was built on solid ground. We avoided the regulation in the following winter by a subterfuge. The Eskimos then built their settlement closer to the beach, and the hut in which we were living had rock, not ice,

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beneath the snow-floor, making the prohibition technically invalid. We cooked our caribou meat with easy consciences, and, when the natives upbraided us, pointed to a tiny patch of gravel exposed beneath our feet. Some accepted our verdict, most of them still disapproved; but by that time they were better acquainted with the strange ways of the white man, and believed that we could do with impunity what they could not attempt without disaster.

The village dance-house formed as usual the forecourt of two snow-huts, which kept it at an even temperature with their two large blubber-lamps. One hut was occupied by Ikpuckhuak, the elderly man who had come to my rescue when his fellow-tribesman tried to carry off my knife. Ikpuckhuak means the "Dirty One"; but the name in no wise reflected on his personal characteristics, for the Eskimos were too familiar with the lack of water during seven months of the year to pay much attention to some of its consequences. Ikpuck, as I shall call him hereafter, was actually cleaner than most of his countrymen, provided one gives the word a rather broad interpretation; and his name was no more than an ancient family title which he inherited in childhood along with his other privileges.

We spent several pleasant evenings on his sleeping-platform, reclining comfortably on caribou robes and listening to the natives in the forecourt singing their

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In these and other ways they showed a greater familiarity with the customs of the white man than the natives of Dolphin and Union Strait. We found even more astounding evidences of contact with Europeans when we visited their snow-huts.

The village itself differed slightly from the usual type, the houses being arranged in line and separated by considerable intervals; normally they lie in a cluster, in order that no evil spirits may harm the inmates as they wander in the darkness from one hut to another. Johansen and I began our tour at one end, and dropped a trail of matches and needles along the line to show our appreciation of the scraps of blubber, meat, and fish with which each housewife paid us tribute. The last hut was also the largest. A dance-house framed the entrance, and half a dozen dogs, twice the usual number, squabbled in the passage, indicating that the occupant was a man of influence in his community. We brushed the dogs aside, and crawled on hands and knees through the low doorway at the inner end. Seated in state on his sleeping-platform was Knife, by repute the shrewdest Eskimo, and the most powerful medicine-man, in this section of the country; and on each side of him, supporting his dignity, sat a wife, the one chosen for her beauty, the other for her skill in hunting. He smiled a welcome as we entered, and, with a haughty gesture of his hand, motioned the younger woman to give us her seat.

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speak the white man's language and perform his intricate dances.

The performance ended at last, and the people began to disperse to their huts. Cockney, who was among the first to vanish, hastened to the station to describe my abnormal behaviour and organize a strong party that would bring me safely home. But before he had finished his narrative I myself arrived on the scene and offered a more reasonable explanation of my conduct.

The natives living out in the strait became very friendly again when the charge of murder was lifted from my head. I visited their settlement twice for periods of three or four days, staying each time with my old acquaintance, Ikpuck. The sun was now much higher in the sky, and a mildness in the atmosphere indicated the approach of spring. Snow-huts would soon be untenable; the slight melting of their ceilings around noon had already caused some of the people to move into large tents made of caribou skins. With the advent of longer days the hunters captured more seals, and the women were packing the surplus blubber into large bags to cache on the coast until autumn. Everything seemed to be changing. The various bands that had united in midwinter were separating out again and moving to different sealing-grounds; and every fortnight, as the new sealing-grounds became exhausted, they moved their settlements forward a few more miles.

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decided, therefore, to turn back and forward the mail by ship when the season for navigation arrived.

With the extra man and dog-team now available, Cox no longer required my assistance in his topographical work; so we returned to the station with Anderson to arrange the programs for the next seven months. Cox intended to complete the map of the coast-line to the mouth of the Rae River, then, ascending the river to its source, cross overland to Bernard Harbour. Chipman and O'Neill would finish their survey of the western coast-line to Darnley Bay; afterward they would continue Cox's survey, extending it from the mouth of the Rae River to the eastern end of Coronation Gulf, where Cox and Anderson would join them in our schooner, the *North Star*, as soon as the ice broke up. Anderson and Johansen were to carry on biological and zoological work at the station during the spring, and Johansen would remain there all summer after Anderson went eastward. I myself proposed to join the Eskimos going to Victoria Island, and return to Bernard Harbour when the sea froze over again in November. Each man worked out his own plans to harmonize with the rest, and Anderson, with full confidence in his staff, approved them all without question, seeking only ways and means to furnish the necessary equipment.

My "father" Ikpuck arrived four days later to guide me to his settlement, which had been moved twice dur-

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ing my brief absence. It was now mid-April, and the natives were travelling in easy stages toward the land, allowing a few days between each migration for the women and children to freight forward the pokes of blubber and the men to resume their sealing. All the families had adopted skin tents in place of snow-houses, or, if their tents were still cached on the coast, they roofed circular walls of snow with the skins of caribou and musk-oxen. The camp was mottled with clothing, suspended from sticks, to dry in the warm sun; and at every little snow-flurry the women rushed from the tents to beat the light flakes from each garment before they melted and spoiled the fur. Night and day had merged into one another, the sun disappearing for one hour only at midnight; and the temperature remained fairly constant around 15°F., except at noon, when it mounted at times to the freezing-point.

The younger women, who were as well versed as the men in the peculiar habits of the seal, often went out with the hunters to escape the monotonous care of clothes and blubber. Each seal appeared to have its special territory, like a bird in the nesting season; and every half-hour or so it came to the surface to breathe. In summer, with open water all around, it rose at any place; but when the sea froze in the autumn it could reach the atmosphere only by breaking through the thin sheet of ice that covered its domain. The breathing-holes made at that season remained open

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supper. Only thirst distressed him, for we had exhausted the oil in our primus lamp and had no means of melting ice or snow. Fortunately, thirty-six hours later, we came upon a settlement of four snow-huts occupied by some Eskimos who were migrating to the mainland, and were able to slake our thirst from their cooking-pots. These natives, too, seemed to regard our caribou fat as an unusual luxury; but I myself derived more enjoyment from the juicy meat of a freshly killed seal.

The distance from this settlement to our own was only about fifteen miles, which we expected to cover easily in one day; but a heavy fall of snow at night obliterated all the trails, and the dense fog that succeeded hid from view everything beyond the leading dog. We wandered from early morning until late in the evening vainly searching for the tents, and at last, giving up all hope, built a small snow-hut and turned into our sleeping-bags. I filled a cup with snow to thaw out against my body, and realized, as never before, how much heat is required to melt a little snow, and how much snow to yield one teaspoonful of water.

The fog dispersed before morning, and we discovered the settlement a mile and a half to our left. An hour later Icehouse was distributing the caribou fat among the enthusiastic villagers, while Ikpuck and I, resting on the sleeping-platform, regaled ourselves

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of three hours. At times I myself almost rivalled his feat without either quenching my thirst or feeling that it was in any way abnormal.

Early in May we camped four miles from the south coast of Victoria Island, where the hunters could continue sealing, if they wished, or intercept the caribou as they grazed on the beach before proceeding inland. Sealing was the more profitable occupation, since the caribou were lean from long travelling and their meat satisfied the hunger of neither men nor dogs. Even their hides were useless, for the larvæ of warble-flies had profusely perforated them, and the long white fur of winter was beginning to shed and give place to a shorter coat of brown. But my companions, who had lived on seal meat alone for four months, craved variety, and the sight of caribou increased the desire. We divided our party; those who had only bows and arrows continued to watch over the seal-holes, and the three who possessed rifles hunted caribou, Ikpuck with a .44 Winchester, The Runner with a .22 Remington, and myself with a Ross Sporting .280.

Our first caribou hunt gave me some useful training for the days to follow. A man who had risen earlier than the rest sighted five caribou passing our camp a mile to the eastward, and awakened Ikpuck and me. We dressed hastily, and, without waiting for breakfast, raced at top speed for the shore to cut them off as soon as they landed. Breathless with the exertion,

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224 range. Chilled with the cold, we left our hiding-place and approached them from another direction. Ikpuck crawled near enough to shoot one of them in the leg; but his bullet inflicted only a flesh-wound, and the caribou with its mate galloped quickly out of sight.

Thus all day misfortune dogged our footsteps. We travelled perhaps thirty miles after our light breakfast at 7 A.M., and by nine o'clock in the evening I was [487] almost exhausted. Then, as we wearily climbed the crest of a ridge, we came upon three fresh snow-blocks that our companions had placed in line to direct us to their new camp. Ikpuck passed them by with a brief glance; he refused to turn back empty-handed when caribou surrounded us on every side, and wished to continue the chase indefinitely, even though we slept on the uncovered snow. But I was less jealous of my reputation as a hunter, and with some difficulty persuaded him to accompany me to camp.

226 Our companions had pitched their tents beside the [361] first lake within the Colville Hills, a lake that abounded in two kinds of fish, lake trout and lake salmon, although it was only half a mile in diameter. Men, women, and children, scattered over its surface, were industriously chiselling holes through the thick ice or jigging their lines in the water below. The caribou meat in their camp had lost its attraction; they wanted to dine on fresh fish, which no one had tasted for six [252] months. In less than two hours they hauled seven

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Lake of Dancing, where we hoped to meet the Tormiat natives from the Great Sound. It was famous not on account of its size—it was even smaller than the lake we had just left—nor for its abundance of fish; but because it lay near the watershed on the highway to the Great Sound, and was encircled by many larger lakes that provided good fishing until midsummer. We set up our tents on one of several old camp-sites around its margin, and settled down to await the Tormiat.

During the next six days we scoured all the hills around us, discovering a few caribou, but no natives save two families that had separated from us on the ice a month before. On every excursion we were joined by Leaf, The Runner's wife, who had borrowed her husband's .22 rifle to shoot at ptarmigan. I lent her my own rifle on one occasion when we were stalking a herd of caribou, and she killed a magnificent bull, the finest we saw on Victoria Island. The other women devoted all their time to fishing, and to drying and caching the meat and fish that began to accumulate in camp.

Spring was now advancing rapidly; so much snow had melted from the hill-sides that sledding would soon be impossible. At times the temperature rose above 40° F., though it dropped below the freezing-point again at evening. Ptarmigan were mating in every hollow, and the children launched many an arrow at them with little success.

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easily on runners of steel. The Chatterbox and his family, who came next in the line, had abandoned their sled and hitched their dogs to a polar-bear skin that carried all their possessions. Last of all came Parted-Hair's sled, in the same condition as Ikpuck's. The Listener and his wife, too old to make unnecessary journeys, remained at the lake to watch over the meat and fish we had spread out on boulders to dry in the sun.

Twelve miles from the Lake of Dancing we sighted caribou and shot a large bull. We camped beside its carcass, and the women, who had failed to bring stone lamps and blubber, trusting to cook over open fires, searched the ridge-tops for fuel. But the season was less advanced on this side of the divide and vegetation scarcer, so that they found no fuel of any kind, not even the wretched dryad. I boiled a little venison for myself on the primus lamp, but the rest dined quite cheerfully on raw meat. Their tents, too, they had left behind, but they propped up two caribou robes for shelter from the breeze and spread out their sleeping-bags under the open sky. I fell asleep to the murmur of the dance-song they were practising for the meeting with the Tormiat from the Great Sound.

Big Lake, which we reached late the next evening, appeared to be circular in outline and about ten miles in diameter. We camped near its southern end, where we found old camp-sites, although the lake itself was silent and deserted.

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westward where I generally made my excursions, trapped and destroyed the solitary hunter. In this very district, many years before, it had spirited away her first husband, who had vanished without leaving a trace. So when I, too, vanished for sixteen hours one day she became greatly alarmed, and entreated Ikpuck to lead a searching party. Willy-nilly, I had to join the fishermen and let my dogs go hungry.

The fish soon commenced to bite less freely in the surrounding lakes, and some of the men wandered farther afield. Ikpuck then shot a caribou eight miles away near the shore of Lake Ever-Frozen. Instead of packing it home, he buried it in the snow and advised moving our camp to its vicinity. Every one welcomed his suggestion and prepared back-packs for the dogs, since the melting of the snow on the ridges rendered our sleds useless until autumn came round again. We concealed in stone cairns the dried fish we had accumulated, raised the empty sleds on stone pillars, and piled on top of them all the stone lamps and other articles too heavy or too bulky to carry around with us during the summer; then, packing on our backs the remainder of the equipment, we abandoned the Lake of Dancing and marched away to our new home.

It was a picturesque sight, this train of people and dogs staggering over hill and lake under burdens almost equal in size and weight to themselves. The men carried the tents and weapons, the women the

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223 291 place. Despite Icehouse's loud remonstrances, despite the laughter of the rest of us, he raced for the pool again, the long tail alternately flapping between his naked legs and streaming in the air behind him. And again the ice gave way beneath him! Chilled to the bone, and thoroughly crestfallen, he hastened to the shore, and in a surly voice bade Icehouse unfasten the packs and set up the tent.

221 361 226 Our jigging in this corner of Lake Ever-Frozen was very productive for a week, and the new camp with its lines of drying fish among the dogs and tents soon became a replica of the one we had just abandoned. To stand on the ice hour after hour and mechanically vibrate a long line in the clear water below was a pleasantly monotonous occupation when the air was mild and the sunlight sparkled in the crystalline snow. [132] Even when fogs rolled down on us, and only the dark water-holes at our feet relieved the whiteness all around, there was a comfortable peace in the atmosphere and in the mellowed voices that penetrated from 224 somewhere unseen. The life was in fact too tranquil, too monotonous, for The Runner and his wife. They craved more activity, and spoke of hunting for caribou [123] to the northward; and when they broached their project to me I rashly promised to accompany them.

We set out on a clear, bright morning and travelled from one ridge to another, pausing on each crest to search the surrounding country. No caribou were

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224
[251] of which we shot. The heads and limbs we buried
[482] in the snow to collect the following day; The Runner took one of the carcasses on his back, I took the other,
[593] and Leaf carried the two hares. After we had proceeded thus for about a mile The Runner changed burdens with his wife, who accepted without a mur-
[123] mur. I promptly changed with him, and a few minutes after with Leaf again, giving her back the hares. But packing was still a new experience to me, and though I reached the camp without mishap, I deeply rued my gallantry the next morning when a thousand pains shot through my neck every time I turned my head.

221 A fortnight's fishing exhausted the bay and com-
226 pelled us to make another move. It mattered little
361 which way we turned, for every ridge bounded a lake that contained both trout and salmon. But since the total catch would be greater if we scattered our forces and settled on different lakes the families separated. The Listener went south, The Chatterbox north, Parted-Hair north-east, and Ikpuck and The Runner east.

221 This dispersal of the individual families completed
361 one half of the strange cycle through which the Eskimos passed year after year. They reacted to the seasons, to their constantly changing environment, more than most of the inhabitants of our globe. The problem of obtaining life's basic needs, food, clothing, and shelter, left little time for other thoughts; and the seals and caribou that furnished them with food, fur-

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nished also the materials for clothing and tents. In winter, when the land lay bare and silent beneath the snow, when the caribou had migrated south, when the twilight hours were brief and the nights long, the natives had banded together into tribes, and tribe combined with tribe to wrest a precarious livelihood from the frozen sea by united effort. Food had been common to all, and their snow-houses had adjoined each other so closely that the families seemed absorbed in the group. With the returning sun and lengthening days nature had recalled its life; the seals had appeared on top of the ice, the caribou had come northward again, and the tribes of Eskimos had broken up into little bands. For a time they had lingered on the ice to hunt more seals; then, turning landward, they had pursued the caribou over the snow-covered hills and plains. Now the snow was vanishing, the caribou had scattered, and fish alone provided a sure livelihood until midsummer. So my party, like many another throughout the country, was dividing into its constituent households, each of which now toiled for itself alone. The tribe no longer existed; society had dissolved into its first element, the family.

The dissolution was not completed in one day. Although the other families scattered, those of Ikpuck and The Runner remained united for a short time longer, wandering eastward together to a district as yet unvisited, and therefore more likely to harbour

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caribou. After two days' marching we set up the tents on the shore of a small lake and discussed our hunting program. Ikpuck and The Runner agreed to scour the land to the northward, where the hills sloped away toward Big Lake. I myself chose the higher land to the south-east, whence I could gain a wider view of the country and perhaps discover some rock-exposure that would indicate the geological formation. Leaf wanted to go with her husband, and Jennie insisted on sharing their fun. As for Icehouse, she was content to fish near camp with little Knife-Blade.

We went our several ways in the morning, but an hour after we separated a dense fog settled over the land. I turned back immediately, and by good luck gained the camp again. Some of the dogs were prowling among the tents, and Icehouse and Knife-Blade were fishing just below, but of Ikpuck and his party there was no sign. I sent Knife-Blade home to guard the camp and fished in the lake all day with Icehouse. From time to time the fog lifted for a few minutes, but closed in again as densely as before. Toward midnight, when the light faded a little, we returned to the tents, ate some dried fish, and tumbled into our sleeping-bags.

Icehouse became alarmed when the fog continued unchanged next day. She knew that the hunters were in no danger of starvation, for they all carried fishing-lines. Even if they were unable to cook their fish

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shades of white men; I named them for her, Jack, Bob, Mary, Jane, and soothed them with fair words until they departed. Others, that were the shades of Eskimos, she herself propitiated in like manner, and banished with her knife a few that seemed loth to depart. At last her efforts succeeded; the jacket told her that the atmosphere would clear on the morrow, and, greatly relieved, she retired to her sleeping-bag to await the result.

An east wind sprang up in the morning and the fog lifted. "Look," she cried, issuing from the tent. "Yesterday we assailed the fog and it has vanished." Ikpuck and his party appeared about noon, weary, but otherwise none the worse for their experience. Thinking it useless to search for the camp until the weather cleared they had wandered about, fishing in different lakes, and huddling together at night on patches of bare ground. Ikpuck had shot a bull caribou that strayed near them, and they had satisfied their hunger with the marrow and back fat, seasoning them with raw fish.

The Runner now decided to move to a lake farther north where they had caught many fish during their late excursion; but Ikpuck wanted to continue eastward in search of more caribou. The former departed first. We watched his family disappear over the ridge, then packed up our own equipment and marched away. So our last link with the tribe was severed, and the dispersal of the band complete.

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BREAD FROM THE WATERS

A T-shaped lake larger than most of the lakes in the vicinity was the site of our next camp. We deposited our packs on its shore and went out on the ice to fish.

Ikpuck and I dug holes, but Icehouse wandered over to a sun-lit pool at one corner and dropped in her line. It hooked a trout even before it touched bottom, and in the space of four hours she drew from this one spot twenty-nine trout and two salmon, although Ikpuck and I, who dug holes not a hundred yards behind her, caught only ten trout between us. It may have been the sunlight alone that attracted the fish; more probably the stream that rushed down the neighbouring slope washed many insects into the pool and made it an unusually rich feeding-ground.

My family thoroughly enjoyed the solitude and freedom of our new camping-place, where we could come and go, eat and sleep, as fancy moved us. The children, Jennie and Knife-Blade, counted this period a holiday, and when fishing grew monotonous, stripped off their clothes and splashed in the water, or snared the longspurs and sandpipers, or shot at ptarmigan with their bows and arrows. Sometimes they vanished for several hours, and returned in the early morning, while we were sleeping, merely to eat and rest before their next excursion. Their parents imposed no restraints on them and exacted no duties. Whenever they were absent, and Icehouse wanted to cook, Ikpuck, forgetting the pride of a hunter, would fill

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almost devoid of vegetation. We stumbled over a bed of dolomite split by frost into rectangular blocks, its resemblance to the floor of an ancient temple heightened by two stone pillars erected several years before to support a kayak or hunting canoe. A mile or two beyond a caribou caught our scent, whisked up its tail, and bounded out of sight behind a low ridge. We could see a fair-sized stream in the distance tumbling among the rocks; and there Ikpuck instructed us to camp while he pursued the caribou that had just disappeared. Twelve hours later, when every one was asleep, he returned, and, pushing open the door of my tent, displayed the skins of two caribou; their carcasses he had left side by side for the women to bring in, merely aligning some boulders on top of a knoll to guide them in their search. Icehouse and Jennie dressed and departed immediately with dogs and packlines. The howling of the other dogs aroused the camp, and a second party went out to look for more caribou. So, for one reason and another, we lingered in this spot nearly three days.

Instead of hunting during this interval, I made a collection of all the plants growing around us, and enjoyed two swims in a neighbouring pool. A bath is a rare luxury in the Arctic, where there is often no water to wash even the face and hands. My companions solved the problem by never washing. Contact with the snow in winter purified them, and in

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a hunting-knife lashed to the end of a tent-pole. That had been a terrific battle, infinitely more thrilling than our recent chase, for what chance had the two bears against a .44 Winchester? But a bear is a bear, however it is slain, and the joy of my companions was not lessened because the danger had been slight. The species remained as formidable as ever, and its representatives, even when dead, should be treated with caution and respect. So the prudent Ikpuck placed a needle-case beside the mother, and a miniature bow and arrow beside the cub, that they might not travel empty-handed to the spirit-home of their kind.

We camped beside the carcass of the larger bear for three days, enjoying the change from venison to a heavier meat. The dogs, more starved than feasted during the last six months, gorged themselves until they could hardly move. We had meat enough to last a fortnight, yet the hunters wantonly shot three caribou, bringing in only the hides, the back fat, and the sinew. When I remonstrated against such wastefulness they merely said that caribou would always be plentiful, and that they wanted more hides to trade with their neighbours. There was one way in which I could check the slaughter, by threatening to supply no ammunition during the winter to any one who wasted the meat. The threat accomplished more than I had anticipated. They not only brought in one of the carcasses, but presented me with all the marrow-

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224 123 bones. More embarrassing still, Icehouse insisted on frying me the liver in back fat, as I had often done for myself; only instead of pounding the fat between two stones before she placed it in the pan, she made quite sure that it would melt by chewing it!

484 313 During our march south, Ikpuck and The Runner visited the coast to search for driftwood, returning with a fine plank that had probably washed overboard from some vessel. So unusual a prize led to consider-

322 411 able discussion. At first they proposed to convert it into two sled-runners, since it required less shaping than the rude logs they generally trimmed down for that purpose; but as both their sleds were in good condition they finally decided to make fish-spears, and Ikpuck split the plank carefully from end to end by means of small wedges of antler driven home with a heavy stone. He then split each section, obtaining four stout poles which he planed and smoothed with his hunting-knife. The care he expended on the task, and his manifest joy at its successful completion, made me realize the handicap under which these people laboured through the scarcity of wood in their country. If I may compare his fish-spears with a product of our own civilization, each pole had the value of a first-class magazine rifle.

361 888 888 All was well in our old camp at Bad Creek, where The Listener's wife had stayed to dry our meat; if anxiety or loneliness had troubled her during her nine days'

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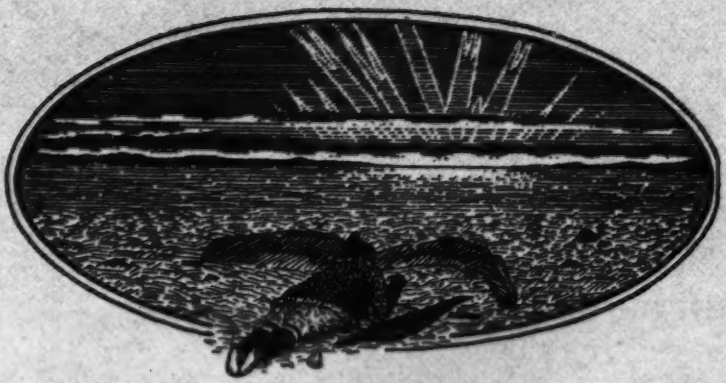

CHAPTER X

DARKENING DAYS

IKPUCK chose for our tent-site a level patch of ground beside a small lake that filled a dip in the rolling plain behind Dryad Harbour. Through a hole in the ice we drew our water, and for fuel we used the dwarf willow that grew abundantly all around, or burned the yellow fat of the polar bear in a naturally hollow stone. Low ridges blocked the view on all sides, shutting out even the sea four miles away; but the ridge to the north overlooked a long valley so rich in moss that we expected the migrating caribou to make it their highway. On the crest of this ridge, therefore, we built a low semi-circular wall of stones, chinked with snow, that would both conceal and shelter the watcher; and every morning, at dawn, some one visited the look-out post to search

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136 although a sudden storm that shatters the ice-field may still engulf a few animals before they have time to regain the shore.

136 The second wave of the migration passed even more
261 quickly than the first, and we found ourselves on a barren coast, cut off from every source of food except the stores that we had accumulated during the months just past. The seals had vanished with the open water, the true fishing-lakes lay back in the hills, and the salmon-trout that Ikpuck had speared in lakes nearer the coast had either ceased to spawn, or were invisible through the crust of snow. Occasionally we sighted two or three ptarmigan, never enough for a single meal; and at the mouth of the creek, three or four feet under the ice, the children speared a few sculpins, and
221 devoured them on the spot. But we had now reached the "doldrum" stage in our voyage, the resting period that intervenes between the intense activity of the caribou hunt and lake-fishing, and the winter sealing on the
221 ice. So with a feeling almost of permanency we estab-
361 lished our tiny settlement on the sea-shore, knowing that we should remain there longer than at any place
342 since the preceding winter. We built our snow-huts with more than usual care, and the women improved them by fixing over the doorways windows of fresh-
221 water ice chipped from a neighbouring lagoon. From
294 morning till night they sat inside beneath their windows, sewing the new garments we needed for the

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437 Eskimos from both sides of the strait, and from the
[361] Coppermine River area, flocked to the station to trade before the opening of the sealing season, until their new-born village on the edge of the ice contained
[123] nearly a hundred and fifty inhabitants. They remained with us for three weeks, giving no trouble, although we excluded all but Ikpuck's family from the house until
124 nightfall. I tried, with Patsy's assistance, to delve into their religion and to record their ancient traditions; but privacy was impossible and fear of public dis-
123 approval sealed their lips. They spent their days in
437 trading with me, or in visiting each other's huts and
574 holding impromptu dances; then, after the white men
125 had put away their note-books and retired to read in their bunks, they gathered around my phonograph and
123 filled the house with song. Although the love of music is inborn, not taught, I had hoped that the sweetness of their voices would kindle an æsthetic glow in the cold, scientific breasts of my companions. But Cox leaped violently from his bed one midnight, and with neither sympathy nor ceremony expelled the belated choristers into the outer darkness.

533 All the chants they sang for me were either dance-
[789] songs or incantations to create fine weather. I asked
[535] them for lullabies; they responded with more dance-
[854] songs. The mother who rocked her baby to sleep on her back, under the warm fur coat, crooned the same melodies that she shouted in the dance-house to the booming of the drum.

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Musk-ox land and restore him without delay, whole in body and untouched in heart. "Men are so foolish with women," she added, noting his tolerant smile.

Four of us, then, The Runner, Girling, Patsy, and myself, piled our belongings upon a sled and turned our faces eastward. Close to Locker Point, we reached a village of the Coppermine River natives, where signs of starvation confronted us on every side. The women, sheltered behind low walls of snow, were fishing for tom-cod to replace the seals their husbands could not catch; the lamps burned low in many of the huts, or were extinguished from lack of oil; and the hungry children gathered round our tent to beg for food. During the two days we stayed in their village we invited as many as we could to share our meals; but when they uncovered our sled in the darkness, broke into a box of hard biscuits, and emptied twenty-five pounds of rice into their mittens, we brushed the snow of their settlement from our shoes and resumed the interrupted march.

Our next stopping-place was a small settlement near the mouth of Tree River, a hundred miles farther east. The inhabitants turned out as usual to greet us, and after the first salutations, an elderly man, who appeared to be the leader of the band, invited us to enter his hut. There his daughter, a young woman about twenty years of age, was skilfully flensing a freshly killed seal. Her greasy clothes, dishevelled hair, gory arms, and

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Being sorely in need of kindling we carried away the board on our sled, and congratulated ourselves on not having to cut shavings of wet driftwood at the end of the day's march, when our fingers were always freezing from cold and exhaustion. The matter passed entirely from my memory, along with other trivial incidents of the journey, until it was mentioned at the station a few weeks later. Then the storm of indignation that burst over my head dumbfounded me. Whose, after all, was the greater vandalism? Mine to destroy with fire the record of my enterprising colleagues, or theirs to mar with an unseemly biscuit box the enduring monument of a gallant explorer?

From the monument we struck north-east until we came to a deserted village of forty snow-huts, representing a population of perhaps 140. The inhabitants had divided into two bands, one travelling north-east, the other north-west, to different sealing-grounds. We followed the latter's sled-trails, partly because they were more numerous, partly also to escape the east wind against which we had struggled all the way from Bernard Harbour. Not a soul was visible as we drove up to the new village through the driving snow; even the dogs, drowsing in the passageways, failed to notice our arrival. The Runner shouted and disappeared into the first hut, to emerge a moment later with a smiling youth whom he introduced to me as his brother. Then the dogs began to howl, people came tumbling out from